Park St. Bristol August 20th 1850.

My dear Emma:—

There was a solemn sort of compact made between ~~our families~~ our parties that we were to announce our safe return home. As this was irrespective of any intelligence we might hope to receive from you, we have not the excuse of waiting for something to answer to allege for not having sooner complied with the affectionate request. If you could have received a tenth part of the mental epistles I have addressed to you, your patience would have been long since exhausted, & you would rejoice at my having deemed it expedient, before beginning an outpouring to those with whom I still spend every unoccupied moment, to write reminders to the people who have in former years ~~both~~ sent contributions to the Boston Bazaar, that the time is come for a renewal of their favors, & to enlarge feelingly on the fear that our absence from home may prove an injury to its interests this year, from the briefness of the time left us to collect things in; & then to excite fresh zeal & sympathy by touching allusions to the way in which, & the friends with whom, we have been passing this season of absence. Time must prove with what good result these appeals will be met; I have misgivings, but never mind till they are realized; meanwhile you shall ~~have~~

know where you are. I want to write to Miss Weston & will address her next time. It is hard to choose but you made my committing a condition of our correspondence & I had faith one of the others wd show her she was not less thought of than the other members of your group. My Father is extremely busy, he has 5 appointments fix'd to-morrow already. He desires me to say he is so overflowing with things to say to you all that he can select no one theme but must sum them up in love to you every one. We wish to hear every particular about you, how & where you are & anything connected with those dear to you in America. Ever believe me dear Emma with special as well as collective love

Yr very affecte

Mary Estlin.

a report of what we have heard, seen, & done, in other directions since the letter which was posted at Ostend in such a scramble that I fear its postscript was most incoherent. We had not a quarter of an hour between the time for determining our plans & being on board the packet, for until ~~the~~ a sudden lull in the wind, we had resigned ourselves to a two day's longer sojourn in that ugly town, & I had anticipated edifying you & Lizzie with a detailed description of the crowds of gay people of every nation & costume & language that were disporting themselves in an immense Restaurant which projects into the sea giving the loungers the benefit of its spray & breezes, & facilities for parading for half a mile along the Digue in full enjoyment of these elements. Having entertained ourselves with this sight we found the attractions of Ostend exhausted; there was not even the charm of hearing German spoken, & the Inns are in very dismal situations, so we were right glad to take leave of it, & still more pleased to have a much smoother passage (of about 6 hours) than we had ventured to anticipate so that my Father did not permanently suffer from its effects, & was able to keep on deck the greatest part of the time. We got as far on our homeward route as Reigate that night, & slept at a quiet little country Inn which was certainly very different to anything that we had been in on the Continent, & in many respects more in accordance with our English notions of comfort. Still, like every thing else here it was deficient in many of the outward attractions which ~~always~~ characterize the Continental buildings of every kind. We contrived to avoid going to London by this division of our journey & came home by a branch line to Reading on Sunday. Mrs Parkes had given us up & was gone to Church, but with Kate she came back to welcome us long before we had waded thro' the piles of letters & papers that were awaiting us. They were both quite well, & had

kept everything in such good order that I have been troubled
with none of the household arrears that generally attend
long absence. They did not give us much of their society
or much opportunity of talking over our adventures for
on Wednesday Mrs Parker & Phabe went to take up
their abode with some relatives at Clifton & the next
morning Kate started to visit a friend at Taunton. People
all express themselves pleased to see us at home again,
& compliment each of us on looking so much better than
when they saw us last. My Father had the satisfaction
of finding himself not forgotten & getting into harness
at once with a series of patients, callers, operations
&c. &c. - including one on a blind lady whom he has to
visit twice a day at a remote part of Clifton. He seems to
enjoy work again & his strength is quite up to it all
at present; it has engagements have been too unintermitting to allow
of his doing much in the writing or reading way, & the
poor Liberators still remain unstudied, tho' some
temptingly headed articles appear thro' their folding.
We found a letter from Mr May, but not later in date than
those you had received before we left Heidelberg. There was also
an acknowledgement from Mrs Richardson (of Newcastle)
of my Father's "Reply" intimating her entire sympathy with
the "Mules" tho' professing herself unacquainted with them.
W. W. Brown has also written a most spirited letter to my
Father about his panorama, which is making such
rapid progress & demanding so much supervision
that he cannot leave it to attend the Peace Congress at
Frankfort, a circumstance on which my Father sees
fit to congratulate him. He (W. B.) has 18 drawings of
his series complete, & good judges say their execution is
equal to those of the "India route" Panorama which has
been drawing crowds daily for several months in Lond.
He has also been holding meetings at Oxford, Reading, &
some other towns, with considerable effect he considers
especially at the former place where he is pressed to go
again. He mentions some Mr Garnett, a protegé of Mrs Richardson

being arrived & gone to the Peace Congreſs tho' not a delegat
& Mr. W. B. gives his opinion that Garnett has made a gr
blunder by coming here to advocate Free Labor Cotton. I
written to tell Mr Webb of our return & ask for some copi
of Mrs Chapman's letter to Glasgow & for help in spreadin
my Father's; but as far as we can discover the one whi
provoked them has not had a wide circulation. A
least we cannot hear of it here & in other places whe
we expected to find it. Each friend we fall in with
expreſses envy of the social advantages we have been
enjoying; & asks sundry questions, taxing our descripti
powers to the utmost, & hanging upon our answers
with greedy ears; & then they baffle us with the perplex
inquiry as to which of the group has made the deepes
inroads into our hearts; whereupon we have to declare
ourselves incompetent to respond & likely evermore to contin
do;—to reiterate the most striking features of our
narrative & make the querists admit that w
such "individualities" to deal with comparison would be
as impracticable as odious, & that the positiv
degree is the only form of speech applicable to t
theme. So you see there would be no danger of you
being long out of our thoughts, even if I could check
their voluntary flight to you in the midst of ever
other pursuit; & if I could help seeing all things & al
people at present in the light in which I fancy the
would strike you, & dreaming what it will be li
to have you here, whether & when that event will ta
place, & what amount of disappointment the vari
objects animate & inanimate will produce on the
minds of each member of your circle. Being unus
struck with the dingineſs & want of grace & symmet
in everything, & (I must own it) with a certain stam
of coarseneſs & vulgarity in most of the people that
croſs me in the thoroughfares, (along with & a want of any very
close bond of union in the majority of those
with whom I come into personal contact) I am

prepared for such a lengthened sojourn amid Parisian
elegancies as Lizzie's, or even yours, making the
aspect of everything here most uninviting. My con-
-solation comes from the ungrumbling nature
& expansive sympathies you manifest; & also from
the recollection that I am in no respect responsible
for the deficiencies of my native town. And I am also
conscious that the brightness & beauty we have just
left makes the house town look dustier & dirtier & darker
than even its wont; & that the force of contrast
has much to do in the effect of social intercourse,
giving to both this unduly sombre hue. In fact
I have wakened just in time to the rapidity with
~~[illegible]~~ which I was being spoiled by prosperity
& to the extensive progress the disease has already
made; & perceive I ought to be very glad, instead of the
reverse, to be called away from the pleasures in which
I would fain have luxuriated, & to be put back into
the harness with which I am so ill fitted to dispense.
This doctrine takes much less time to lay down, than to work
out in its practical consequences; & the consciousness of
the intense selfishness of still looking wistfully at one
spot in Germany, & yearning after a group of distant
images, while the whole range of duty lies wide open close
before me, did not at once crush the hydra headed
rebuddings of the stifled regrets. Sometimes they broke
out on allusions to the places we have left, or those
we had fondly hoped to see, & at others in references to
German literature & our progress in talking the language but, most
frequently, from the solicitous enquiries of each friend
about Mrs Follen with our united disappointments at my
meagre materials for satisfying them. When, as has not
unfrequently occurred, this disappointment has given
~~them~~ friends an opening for tauntingly assuring me their estimate
of my late superior advantages, & their consequent envy of me
~~had~~ dwindled to insignificance, I have to turn their

air of ascendancy into one of compassion, the sentiment which now prevails towards me. ~~But~~ having boldly faced the enemy on every side I flatter myself it is at length vanquished, after many struggles & one violent pitched battle, & all of you, whose devotedness to a lofty cause has raised out of the self-regard which cleaves to some of us, will stare at my taking the trouble to dwell so long myself upon the theme, still less to inflict it upon any one else. Still as this rebellious state of mind *was* absorbing my own notice, & as you had intimated your taste & wish for having details of the inward as well as outward life, you must tolerate this, perhaps unintelligible, effusion. I only wish that I was a great deal more like Mrs Chapman, so that the first ~~must~~ should be swallowed up in the last & self love extinguished in devotedness to higher ends; but as yet such a condition seems as far out of reach as she is in person at this moment. Happily where the aim exists, its attainment is helped on by studying characters in which the goal ~~is~~ has been reached; & in these respects, as well as many collateral ones, I feel infinitely richer for the advantages of the last two months. My Aunt (Mrs Michell who enters heart & soul into our Anti Slavery interests) has just promised to come & see us, for the sake of hearing all we have to tell, & maintains she desires nothing but to listen continuously till we have gone over every particular from our first day in Paris to our last at Heidelberg. So you see there is some very gratifying work in store for me, & having nearly finished the *writing* services I can render the bazaar it will be doubly pleasant to occupy my fingers in its behalf while travelling over again the last two months of excitement & variety, shorn of the fatigues, but alas! of the vivid charms too, of the reality. There is the Annual appeal for it I see in the recent Liberators & Standards; the latest of these papers which reached us to-day contains, ~~[illegible]~~ an account of the 1st of August celebration at Worcester (not a word about "refreshments", & how remiss we have been never to prepare that Heidelberg report!) There is something satisfactory in seeing a speech of Russell Carpenter's at this Convention, not because the speech contains any very stirring sentiment, but because he *did* speak on the occasion & did not make any apologetic concessions in his allusions to what his visit to the South had brought under his own observation. Mr Quincy in a subsequent speech designates what R. Carpenter said as "appropriate", which I know he would not if he had not been convinced of its *sincerity* as well. We shall feel much interest in any private information you may receive about his speakings & withholdings on this subject, & will promise to keep any information you may impart quite to ourselves, & only use it as an element in the conversations we shall soon be having with him in all probability, as he was to sail for England on the 8th. Aug. Mr May wrote very discontentedly of R.C.'s course, but not more so than we were prepared for by the previous accounts. There are some very sensible comments of Harriet Luptons on Mr H. C. Wright's letters in one of the late Liberators, intended to be strictly private, but published at Mr May's instigation (without her name) from their embodying in a clear condensed form, a very general sentiment awakened by their perusal. I wish you may see ~~them~~ the articles, & also that you may fall in with the writer in the course of your travels. You did not tell me the name of the cousin whose illness was causing you anxiety when we parted, but, from the description of her abode, her age, & her life of devotion to the Abolition cause I cannot help identifying her with the notice of Lucretia A. Cowing which appears in the Standard we have just received. The tribute to her worth is affecting, & the lesson drawn from her removal from the field of faithful service - of incentives to increased fidelity & zeal - is as forcible as it is feeling. I need hardly give expression to the deep sympathy you know I feel with you all at being called to give up the hearty co-operation you can so ill spare from your great work, as well as the to bear the sundering of the private tie of relationship & friendship. It needs a strong faith to give the heart's acquiescence at the same time as the lips in such an appointment, but not an unattainable one; & every past call for patient submission helps in it, while the experiences connected with each separation has awakened a livelier confidence that the Hand that removes one laborer from the vineyard will raise others to supply the vacant place.

You see dear Emma I have a sort of conviction that your mode of viewing these subjects accords with my own sufficiently to give

me no scruples in expressing yours. You can't think
how I long to carry on some of the pleasant talks we
commenced during our excursion, & how often & how
well I finish them up in imagination, & wonder
whether we shall ever have the means of doing so in
a more conclusive manner to both parties! And
then I fly off to your sister in America & find myself in cl
communion with her, I am looking forward to the
pleasure of writing to her in the box which will take
the Bazaar things, unless anything occurs to deman
an earlier communication. Mrs H. Thomas is devote
herself very assiduously to collecting, & setting ~~people~~ others to
work, & as she is one of those people whose interest
in a thing is materially affected by the amount of
personal activity & influence that can be brought
to bear, I am delighted to leave all the bustle to her,
content myself with touching a wheel here & there
to which she has no key. Miss Carpenter is with h
newly married sister in the North, so we have no
yet recounted to her any of our doings, or been edified w
her comments. Mr Armstrong we are glad to find see
he & his wife are most eager for information about you
& especially to ascertain when you are likely to come
to England, a question which meets us at every turn
I have been detaining this a day's post in the hope of rendering
more worth having by receiving a note to Miss Weston from Phebe
& of hearing something from Mr Webb, both which are realized. He is re
at our return because England felt ~~very~~ lonely while we were
out of it, we constituting Bristol, & you Paris to him, & both plac
having felt desolate since we left them. [As he lives in Ireland
I don't see clearly how he stands affected by this desolatio
He says he is full of the gratitude consisting of a lively anticipation of
future favors of which I have afforded a foretaste, & is blo
up with expectation of delightful letters containing detai
of all we have said & done & heard while in your society. H
thinks us very fortunate individuals to have had so much o
such company; longs for seven leagued boots to unite him
it, is sure my appreciations & conclusions of each of you
correct since they entirely coincide with his judgement; is
uncertain what contributions to the Bazaar Dublin may
afford, it always being a mystery to him where anything comes fro
so full of enthusiasm at the speeches reported in the recent Stan
& decided that "the Am. Abolitionists have goodness enough to redee
America with all her wickedness." The more I write to you the more
things to say grow, making the limits of foreign postage an insupp
trammel. The only way will be to begin again soon & send it as soon as